

Creese & Cook Tannery

Superfund Site, Danvers, MA

U.S. EPA | HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM AT EPA NEW ENGLAND



THE SUPERFUND PROGRAM protects human health and the environment by investigating and cleaning up often-abandoned hazardous waste sites and engaging communities throughout the process. Many of these sites are complex and need long-term cleanup actions. Those responsible for contamination are held liable for cleanup costs. EPA strives to return previously contaminated land and groundwater to productive use.

INTRODUCTION

On May 21 2013, EPA announced that Creese & Cook Tannery (Former) Site was added to the National Priorities list (NPL), which is also referred to as the Superfund list. Listing on the NPL means that this Site is eligible for long-term cleanup action financed under the federal Superfund program. The Site was the location of a leather tannery and finishing facility from 1903 to 1983. Investigations at the Site have identified tannery-related contamination in soils, sediment, and surface water. Below is a description of environmental fieldwork that will begin in Danvers this May, followed by a summary of future Superfund milestones and opportunities for community involvement which occur throughout the process.

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PUBLIC MEETING

7:00 pm - April 30, 2014
Polish Club Danvers
12 Cheever Street

and evaluation of soil, groundwater, sediment and surface water on properties on the east side of the Crane river (refer to property figure). The field investigation will begin in early May 2014. EPA has recently obtained signed access agreements from various property owners in areas where we need to conduct surveying and/or environmental sampling.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Residents can expect to see heavy equipment, including drill rigs and support trucks on various properties within the Site study area (refer to figure) in early May and for approximately 4 to 6 weeks beginning in early June. Geophysical and topographic survey equipment will be used to collect measurements throughout the study area, and drill rigs will be used to collect subsurface soil samples and to install subsurface groundwater monitoring wells. People can also expect to see contractor personnel taking soil, groundwater, sediment and surface water samples, performing land surveys, and directing surveying and drilling activities.

EPA and The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) will be hosting a public meeting on April 30, 2014, at 7:00 pm, at the Polish Club Danvers. This will include a presentation to introduce the project team, provide a brief site history, provide a summary of past removal cleanup actions, show the locations for the upcoming field work and to also provide an overview of EPA's remedial investigation process. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD WORK

EPA's technical team is about to begin its site investigation efforts in the field. This step of the Superfund process means that EPA will begin conducting extensive sampling

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This phase of the work is not expected to generate any hazardous vapors. However as a precaution for workers and residents, air sampling will be conducted for volatile organic compounds and other gases (including methane). This will be accomplished by using field equipment including four gas meters.

For a two to three week period in June, EPA will have our onsite mobile laboratory present in order to analyze samples for organic and inorganic (metals) contamination. The initial phase of field work is expected to be completed between early May and late August. Subsequent smaller field sampling events may be conducted in October 2014 and January and April 2015 if necessary. It is important to note that all of EPA's contractors and site personnel will be following a site specific health and safety plan and are also trained in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) requirements.

SUPERFUND PROCESS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

EPA follows a step-by-step process to determine the best way to clean up a Superfund site and protect human health and the environment. Throughout the various steps of the cleanup, EPA staff will be working to keep the community informed of progress by conducting public meetings, issuing regular fact sheets about progress at the site, conducting workshops for community groups, and making presentations to civic groups, schools, and local officials to help everyone better understand the cleanup process.

REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION / FEASIBILITY STUDY (RI/FS)

The RI/FS phase of the process determines the nature and extent of contamination at the site, determines if there are any unacceptable risks requiring cleanup, tests whether certain technologies are capable of treating the contamination, and evaluates the cost and performance of technologies that could be used to clean up the site. The RI/FS is starting in June and can take approximately 3 to 4 years to complete.

Prior to the beginning of the RI/FS phase, EPA will begin its outreach and community involvement

efforts at the site. Kate Melanson, the EPA Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC), and Derrick Golden, the EPA Remedial Project Manager (RPM), will work with community members before and throughout the investigation and cleanup process. Early on, the EPA staff will interview community members, local officials, and others, to gather information about the site and the community and to learn how community members may want to be involved in the process. EPA will then prepare a Community Involvement Plan that specifies the outreach activities that will be used to address the concerns and expectations community members raised in the interviews. The plan will be readily available to the community.

EPA has established an Information Repository at the Peabody Institute Library in Danvers, where all correspondence, reports, and documents pertaining to the site cleanup will be stored and available to community members. The information will also be available on the EPA website. EPA has also established an Administrative Record for the site, at the EPA offices in Boston, as part of the Information Repository. As the cleanup process moves forward, EPA will add to the Administrative Record all the relevant documents used in making the eventual cleanup decision, as well as relevant documents on technologies that were considered but ultimately rejected.

In addition, EPA will issue public notices and other documents to communicate important information about the cleanup, including the potential availability of a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) or other assistance resources to help the community understand technical information about the cleanup to better participate in decisions affecting the cleanup.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DURING THE RI/FS

- Ask the CIC or the RPM questions about the site.
- Consider whether to form a Community Advisory Group (CAG).
- Consider whether your community group should apply for a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG).

- Consider whether your community should request help through the EPA's Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) contract.
- Participate in any public meetings or other EPA events.

PROPOSED PLAN

Based on results of the feasibility study portion of this phase, EPA will develop a Proposed Plan for cleaning up the site. The Agency will notify the community so that interested members of the community can comment on the Proposed Plan. In addition, the Agency will hold a public meeting to discuss the Proposed Plan. EPA then will develop a Responsiveness Summary to formally respond to any public comments received. If, based on public comments, the Proposed Plan is changed substantially, EPA will issue an explanation of the changes made and invite public comment on the changes. It can take approximately 3 to 4 years to complete the RI/FS.

RECORD OF DECISION (ROD)

The ROD explains which cleanup alternatives will be used at the Site. It contains information on site history, site description, site characteristics, community participation, enforcement activities, past and present activities, contaminated media, the contaminants present, description of the response actions to be taken, and the remedy selected for cleanup. The development of the ROD also includes consideration of how the site could be used in the future. As part of the ROD, EPA develops a Responsiveness Summary to formally respond to public comments received. It can take approximately 1 and 2 years from the completion of the RI/FS to prepare a Proposed Plan and Record of Decision.

REMEDIAL DESIGN AND REMEDIAL ACTION (RD/RA)

This phase of the process includes preparing for and doing the bulk of the cleanup at the site. For the former Creese & Cook Tannery (Former) Site, EPA does not yet know whether this work will be performed by EPA, or by potentially responsible parties with EPA and state oversight.

Throughout this phase, EPA staff will keep community members advised about the progress of the clean-up through periodic public events, newsletters, fact sheets, and presentations to civic groups, schools, and local leaders.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT DURING RD/RA

- Learn about the final design for the cleanup by attending public events or reading the information EPA distributes.
- Work through your CAG, TAG recipient, or TASC provider to stay informed about the progress of the cleanup.
- Attend periodic public events about progress at the site. If you can't attend, visit the Information Repository or read site information on-line.
- Contact the CIC or RPM with questions or comments.
- Participate in site tours with EPA to observe cleanup activities.

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